

## Top firms go the extra mile

The top 50 list shows IT training business was steady last year but, as the recession bites, firms see a need to offer more **p20**



project management and service management retain their popularity.

Franklin says: 'The structure and certainty of effective programme management is needed right now. Organisations cannot afford to fail, run over budget etc ... and you need to know what the benefits are going to be. Benefits management training is likely to be a growth area.'

Franklin says she senses an urgency to get programme training under way now – in the private sector to run programmes to make money, and in the public sector while there is still money this year. 'Next year there is a risk of changing government, and also there may be more financial pressure as public budgets may be cut,' she says.

MacPherson feels that popular subjects will be the perennials of core technical knowledge, plus virtualisation, security, managerial topics and project management.

Plus, he backs green IT qualifications, which can help make savings as well as embracing the environmental agenda.

Stevens believes that training companies need a broader-based offering than classroom-based training, and should move more into blended learning. He sees electronic performance support as a growth area.

In terms of training related to projects, there is a likelihood of a decrease in demand as projects and programmes will be slower to get off the ground.

Pryor-Jones says: 'This year, projects have been more difficult to close and projects are slipping... but not cancelled yet. Where people are spending money it is aligned to business goals. People are prepared to spend when putting in a new system, but there's not so much money available for business-as-usual and nice-to-have training.'

Similarly, Brine says: 'For next year, I know of one programme that is already being scaled down considerably. I think there will be less project-based work. Any

organisation is naïve if they think that they are so good it won't affect them. Training departments are being asked to be sure they get value for money.'

## Recession-busting tips for customers

One argument training departments can use as to why continue training in a recession, suggests Franklin, is for staff motivation.

'Maybe a company can't give bonuses this year, but training is tax-deductible and still a reward, and will have a tremendously positive effect,' she says. 'Individuals feel important because a company is investing in them. Plus it could be used for team-building if a company is looking at a new way of running projects or working together.'

'If you cannot raise the training flag nor afford tea-bags it sends the wrong signals to staff. If training is happening it gives out a powerful message that the company is looking to the future.'

Pryor-Jones echoes her views: 'At the end of the last dotcom boom, companies couldn't pick up quickly enough. I'd urge customers to think twice about budgetary constraints before not training. They should think how they can do training differently, rather than not at all, which could have a negative impact in the medium-term.'

That said, Pettman sounds a note of caution about making sure the company is on the right course before diving into training. 'I'd say rather than companies changing methodologies, for example to Prince2, think about why you are doing it and focus on ensuring you deliver the key benefits. Rather than sheep dip, think about the process and what success looks like for your organisation. Organisations who sheep dip are often training but not delivering – for example with project management, consider your company ability with risk and benefits management – if you are not doing things like that correctly,

## New entrants to top 50

**Verridian**  
**Brightwave**  
**Quanta**  
**Globaltech Solutions**  
**Assist Knowledge Development**

then a change in methodology will not see any material improvement.'

Customers should also be careful not to waste money, points out Global Knowledge, for instance by planning ahead when they have to train their people in order to retain something such as Cisco Gold Partner status, and thus avoiding paying a last minute premium for the training. Global Knowledge has introduced a portal to alert customers when their staff need to re-take certification courses.

Stevens suggests that if you are investing in training, try and evaluate and monitor how effective it's been. 'Try and gauge how much you've achieved your objectives,' he says. 'It's amazing how much of a demonstrable effect it can have.'

The IT training companies urge customers to get in touch if budgets are tight, so that they can look at innovative ways of running courses, for instance an in-house course may work out cheaper than a public schedule. Steven suggests considering a train-the-trainer approach as sometimes people in an organisation can make very good trainers. Plus, he advocates looking at technology to see if it can help make cost savings.

Clients could also make savings by taking advantage of offerings such as Verridian's tiered pricing model for trainers where customers pick trainers in a certain price band, according to their experience.

To sum up, think before you act and make sure that you are getting value for that hard won budget.



**Maybe a company can't give bonuses this year, but training is tax-deductible and still a reward**

Melanie Franklin,  
Mavon Training

## Top 50 The full list.

Rank 2009	Rank 2008	Company	Revenue Em	Change %	Website
1	1	QA	86.0	0.2	www.qa.com
2	5	IBM Training	24.5e	26	www.ibm.com/services/learning/uk/
3	2	Learning Tree International	24.1	5	www.learningtree.co.uk
4	4	SAP	22.4e	4	www.sap.com/uk/education
5	6	Logica	21.5e	12	www.logica.co.uk
6	9	SkillSoft	18.0e	9	www.skillssoft.com
7	8	Parity Training	16.4	-12	www.paritytraining.com
8	10	Oracle University	15.9e	3	www.oracle.com/uk/education
9	14	ILX Group	15.3e	23	www.ilxgroup.com
10	7	Global Knowledge	14.3e	0	www.globalknowledge.co.uk
11	15	Assima	14.1	21	www.assima.net
12	16	ThirdForce	11.3	-6	www.thirdforceplc.com
13	17	Remarc Group	10.5	9	www.remarc.co.uk
14	12	RWD Technologies	10.3e	-18	www.rwd.com
15	22	Firebrand Training	8.1	5	www.firebrandtraining.co.uk
16	20	Training Synergy	8.1	-2	www.trainingsynergy.com
17	19	HP Education Services	8.0e	6	www.hp.com/uk/education
18	18	Sun Microsystems	7.8e	-8	http://uk.sun.com/training
19	24	PPI Learning Services	7.7e	35	www.ppllearning.com
20	13	New Horizons	7.5e	-21	www.nhtraining.com
21	43	FDM Group	7.3	24	www.fdmgroup.com
22	28	Redtray	7.1	13	www.redtray.co.uk
23	25	Fast Lane	6.4	16	www.flane.co.uk
24	39	DNS Arrow	5.7	90	www.dnsarrow.co.uk
25	35	EMC	5.2	67	www.emc.com
26	23	Steria Learning Services	5.2e	-32	www.steria.co.uk
27	-	Verridian	4.8e	200	www.verridiangroup.co.uk
28	26	BT Training Solutions (NI)	4.8	4	www.trainingsolutions.bt.com
29	36	PremierIT	4.6	29	www.premierit.com
30	44	Ideal Training	4.5e	80	www.idealts.co.uk
31	37	Bray Leino BroadSkill	4.5e	40	www.brayleino broadskill.co.uk
32	29	Symantec Education Services	4.4e	12	www.symantec.com
33	31	Red Hat	4.2e	8	www.redhat.com
34	33	iTrain	4.1	11	www.itraineducation.co.uk
35	32	Sage	4.0e	10	www.sage.com
36	-	Brightwave	3.8e	27	www.brightwave.co.uk
37	38	SAS Software	3.3	9	www.sas.com/uk
38	42	Maven Training	3.2	14	www.maventraining.co.uk
39	30	Afiniti	3.2	-7	www.afiniti.co.uk
40	34	WDR	3.0e	0	www.wdr.co.uk
41	-	Quanta	2.7e	25	www.quantaco.uk
42	-	Globaltech Solutions	2.6	53	www.gts-uk.com
43	40	WWP Training	2.5	-6	www.wwp.co.uk
44	47	Happy Computers	2.5e	19	www.happy.co.uk
45	49	StayAhead Training	2.5	5	www.stayahead.com
46	50	Host Computers	2.5e	1	www.hostcomputers.co.uk
47	48	Interskill Learning	2.3	-3	www.interskill.co.uk
48	46	NorthgateArinso	2.2e	-10	www.northgate-is.com
49	41	Kaleidoscope Training	2.1	-25	www.kcct.co.uk
50	-	Assist Knowledge Development	2.0	65	www.assistkd.co.uk

### How the top 50 was compiled

This table of the top 50 training companies in revenue terms was researched and compiled by Pardo Fox. The revenues shown in the table are for each company's financial year ending in 2008 or cover the calendar year 2008, and relate to IT training delivered in the UK. Eligibility is open to companies with revenues derived principally from the sale of training to employers for their staff, excluding colleges, universities and firms selling to private individuals or delivering publicly funded training.

For companies whose results are on public record, the actual turnover from their accounts has been used. For those with no published turnover, an estimate has been made based on available data, shown by an 'e'. Some revenues given in last year's table have been restated, and growth relates to the updated figure.

This information has been carefully researched, but we cannot guarantee its accuracy or completeness, and will not accept liability for any direct, indirect or consequential loss arising from its use.

For further information, visit [www.pardofox.com](http://www.pardofox.com).

### Footnotes to Top 50

**QA-10** acquired **Agertise Training** in September 2008, and the combined business now trades as **QA**. The revenue figure quoted is the notional total revenue of the constituent parts in 2008.

**Parity Training** was acquired by **ECS** in February 2009. **PPI Learning Services** bought **The Projects Group** in March 2008. **New Horizons'** centres in England and Scotland entered administration in April 2009 but the worldwide parent company plans to re-open the London office.

**PremierIT** acquired **Major Training** in October 2008. **BroadSkill** became part of **Bray Leino Group** in March 2008.

**Oracle** bought **Sun Microsystems**, and **Redtray** acquired **Academy Internet** in April 2009.